



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
MICHIGAN WOMEN'S COMMISSION  
LANSING

JUDY KARANDJEFF  
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

December 5, 2006

Dear Members of the Family and Children Services Committee:

The Michigan Women's Commission opposes passage of House Bill 5267. We are very concerned that mandatory joint custody will place undue burdens on some parents to prove that joint custody might not be the best arrangement. The proposed bill changes the current standard of each case being decided based on the best interest of the child.

We are particularly concerned that parents who may have been victims of domestic violence will have to prove that the other parent is unfit in order to stop joint custody requirements as proposed in this legislation. These victims of domestic violence and children could be subject to more abuse as well as increased litigation costs.

Custody decisions need to be left for the court to decide on a case by case basis as is done today. We do not want any harm to come to the children and each case needs to be decided individually. This one size fits all approach will not result in an improved quality of life for the children or families involved.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Judy Karandjeff".

Judy Karandjeff  
Director